

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Fairness and balance in a democracy is necessary for the public good. A station or stations that cower to one political agenda do not serve the entire interest of their viewing constituency. I find Sinclair's decision to be most frightening in a democracy where this kind of manipulation and control of the public mind is not balanced by the showing Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 911 - which I am sure Sinclair would never do that because that would defeat their political agenda and their close ties with the Bush Administration and interfere with their purchasing power through this kind of media control.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.